

Message Text

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SUBJ: ANTI-INTERMENT CAMPAIGN FAILS TO IMPRESS GOI

1. ALL DUBLIN PAPERS MORNING DECEMBER 11 REPORTED ON CONCLUSION OF AN ANTI-INTERMENT CAMPAIGN ORGANIZED BY A LOCAL POLITICAL REVIEW, "HIBERNIA." ACCORDING TO REPORTS, CAMPAIGN COLLECTED 101,000 SIGNATURES THROUGHOUT WORLD. MANY WERE FROM AMERICANS, INCLUDING CONGRESSMAN AND OTHER POLITICAL LEADERS FROM NORTHEASTERN STATES AND CALIFORNIA. IN REPUBLIC, FORTY-EIGHT DEPUTIES (OUT OF 144) SIGNED ANTI-INTERMENT DOCUMENT. MOST ARE BELIEVED TO BE FROM OPPOSITION FIANNA FAIL PARTY, WITH SOME FROM LABOR AND ONLY ONE FROM FINE GAEIL. CAMPAIGN WAS SUBJECT OF BITTER CONTROVERSY HERE. MINISTER CONOR CRUISE O'BRIEN LEAD OPPOSITION TO IT, CLAIMING THAT IT PLAYED INTO HANDS OF PROVISIONAL IRA. MANY PERSONS OPPOSED TO IRA SIGNED THE ANTI-INTERMENT "RESOLUTION," HOWEVER, EXPLAINING THAT THEIR POSITION WAS BASED ON CIVIL-RIGHTS BELIEFS.

2. COMMENT: IT IS CERTAINLY TRUE THAT SINN FEIN/IRA MADE MAXIMUM EFFORT TO EXPLOIT THIS CAMPAIGN. PROVO DESTRUCTION OF LONG KESH INTERMENT CAMP WAS PROBABLY TIMED SPECIFICALLY TO COINCIDE WITH COLLECTION OF SIGNATURES. AFTER DESTRUCTION OF CAMP, INTERNEES'

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LIVING CONDITIONS WERE BAD, AND PROVOS TRIED TO GAIN SYMPATHY

BY BLAMING IT ALL ON THE BRITISH. VISIT OF CONGRESSMAN LESTER WOLFF WAS APPARENTLY INTENDED TO BE A PIECE DE RESISTANCE OF PROVO CAMPAIGN, BUT THE CONGRESSMAN ATTEMPTED TO CORRECT THE RECORD AFTER ARRIVING AT DUBLIN AND FINDING THAT IRA HAD (IN HIS WORDS) TRIED TO USE HIM. (DUBLIN 1652).

3. FACT IS THAT IRA HAS DONE EVERYTHING POSSIBLE TO KEEP INTERNMENT ALIVE. IT IS A MAJOR IRRITANT FOR CATHOLIC COMMUNITY AND ACCOUNTS FOR MUCH OF WHATEVER SUPPORT THAT COMMUNITY STILL GIVES TO PROVOS. IT MAY SEEM PARADOXICAL THAT THE MAIN ORGANIZATION TO SUFFER FROM INTERNMENT IS ALSO STRIVING TO KEEP IT IN EXISTENCE, BUT MOST POLITICAL SOURCES AGREE THAT IT IS TRUE. ASSASSINATION OF NORTHERN IRELAND JUDGES BY PROVOS IS CONSIDERED TO BE PART OF EFFORT TO KEEP INTERNMENT IN EXISTENCE (BY MAKING IT DIFFICULT TO TRY TERRORISTS IN NORMAL COURTS).

4. PUBLIC HERE IS NOW FAIRLY SOPHISTICATED ABOUT IRA GOALS, AND MANY PEOPLE WHO SIGNED ANTI-INTERNMENT RESOLUTION MUST HAVE HAD NO SYMPATHY FOR PROVOS. THERE IS BROAD OPPOSITION TO INTERNMENT, PARTLY ON CIVIL-RIGHTS GROUNDS AND PARTLY BECAUSE OF FACT THAT CATHOLIC COMMUNITY HAS BEEN MAIN VICTIM.

5. NO GOI MINISTER SIGNED HIBERNIA RESOLUTION, AND GOI CONTACTS HAVE TOLD US THAT THEY ARE NOT PRESSING BRITISH TO END INTERNMENT. GOI WOULD, IN FACT, BE RELUCTANT TO SEE BRITISH YIELD TO PROVOS ON ANY ISSUE. GOI HAS LONG CONSIDERED INTERNMENT A MISTAKE, HOWEVER, AND WOULD PROBABLY BE RELIEVED IF BRITISH COULD FIND A WAY TO GET THEMSELVES OFF THE HOOK.
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